

**Early Childhood Advisory Council
Small Group Operating Principles
Summary of Discussion Groups
October 15, 2013**

1. Operating Principles' Mission: What is the scope of work and should it be expanded?

Please rank order your opinion on the scope of the ECAC work:

- 4 Status Quo – Birth through Kindergarten
- 3 Prenatal through Kindergarten
- 2 Birth through Third Grade
- 1 Pre-natal through Third Grade

Based on your ranking, please discuss and share:

- Rationale for this scope
 - Prenatal to 3rd would help reduce silo-ing but may also be a challenge as it is very broad.
 - Research supports this foci
 - Focuses on the whole child
 - 1 group recommended prenatal through Kindergarten and creating a Task Force on prenatal to third grade to look at how the broader direction could be possible in the future.
 - Better long term view; brings in more families and communities focus
 - Birth to third – easier to articulate
- If suggesting a change:
 - What do we gain or lose as a result of this changed focus

- Prenatal to third grade – recognizes the importance of the earliest years where we can have the greatest impact
- Consistent with Head Start Act and Early Head Start
- Less focus on the specific
- Might spread existing resources too thin
- If we focus on Birth to third, a caution not to become too focused on literacy (as a result of the focus on third grade reading).
- By focusing on this broad a scope, could become difficult to encompass all aspects
- Would assist with Read to Lead, open up an opportunity for coordination.
- What would need to change to accommodate a broader focus?
 - Would need to add people from Birth to 3 and K-3
 - Bring in prenatal stakeholders Wisconsin Association of Prenatal Care, OB/GYN, more from DHS Public Health, home visiting.
 - Add Wisconsin Afterschool Network, more representation from Birth to 3, WECA and Wisconsin Head Start Association
 - Prenatal to grade 8 already in alignment with current committees if they broaden scope
 - Charge and scope would need to change, a different focus
 - Greater early childhood focus on teacher licensing / certification and curriculum
 - Cradle to career focus

➤ More on comprehensive assessment.

2. Operating Principles' Mission: Public Meetings and Relationship with Others

Discussion Question: How can the ECAC do better at getting the word out about the importance of early childhood learning and development?

- Be more transparent about communication
- Be more transparent about how external stakeholders can connect to ECAC
- Statewide messaging on early learning
- Use of social media
- Develop press releases for editorial boards on early education topics
- Share stories with the media, especially local papers
- 3 groups talked about the importance of branding, a suggestion we bring back Elliot Regenstein to talk about other state branding efforts
- Connect Wisconsin to other related national efforts.
- Consider using ECAC as a clearinghouse for information and messages, data templates, fact sheets, newsletters
- Consider creating a “master agenda” that lays out what is planned for each meeting for deliverables and action items (the timeline has somewhat served this purpose in the past).
- Be sure to use common language
- Have a monthly meeting or communication/e-mail/update to the ECAC
- Share more information about what the ECAC is doing
- Consider other partners such as AARP and Faith Based organizations

3. Operating Principles': ECAC, Steering Committee, Project Teams, and cross department resources:

Discussion Question: How can we strengthen the working relationship and communication between the ECAC, the Steering Committee, the staff, and Project Teams?

- 4 groups talked about more e-mail, more communication in between meetings among all people and committees between each meeting
- Receive reports ahead of time, members are expected to review and provide fewer oral reports.
- Create and track action items
- Add more information about responsibilities or roles, e.g., a responsibility matrix.
- Acknowledge difficulty in how long things play out; e.g., we hope to have revised Operating Principles in December
- Stick to principles; continue to remind ECAC what they are.
- Provide more information/be more public about project team meetings
- One group supported the concept of having at least one co-chair from each project team serve on the Steering Committee
- Use the ECAC as a clearinghouse for providing key data, and consistent messages being
- Provide more information to ECAC in advance so members know if there is an action or discussion item they should be prepared to weigh in on and so they know what is happening.
- Regular meetings between Steering Committees and Project Team Chairs

- Provide information about other committee meetings and key agenda topics and dates so that others may join for particular topics or items, putting a calendar on the website.
- Open invitation to Council members to attend Steering Committee.
- Post agendas and minutes from Steering Committee.
- Concern – more information and transparency can lead to playing out the issues in public making compromise more difficult.

4. Any other suggestions or considerations for the Operating Principles?

- Consider an intergenerational focus
- Increase connection to community development
- In addition to the Registry, increase awareness of career ladder and educational opportunities for early care professionals.
- Review periodically for changes
- Reinforce mission frequently.